

Eighth Annual Assessment Report 2001-2002 University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

2001-2002 Assessment Subcommittee

Rick Wilke
Patricia Holland
Kris Hoffenberger
Kirby Throckmorton, Chair

Donna Christensen
Matthew Stefan
Kaitlyn Julius

Assessment Activities

Assessment Subcommittee

Due to problems with using placement tests to assess sophomore level verbal and quantitative skills and the fact that the ACT-COMP is no longer available for senior level assessment, the subcommittee reviewed available instruments and recommended that ACT's Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) be used as a component of sophomore and senior level GDR assessment. The Faculty Senate approved the recommendation. CAAP provides assessment information on reading with sub-scores on arts/literature and social/natural sciences; writing with sub-scores on usage/mechanics and rhetorical skills; mathematics with a sub-score through college algebra; science reasoning; and, critical thinking. Sophomore, junior and senior norms are available and value-added is available for sophomores. CAAP comes in 40-minute modules, which can be completed in 50-minute class periods.

The subcommittee administered a Minority Studies Assessment Survey to all students enrolled in MNS courses fall 2001.

A recommendation to change the review/revision of assessment plans by departments from a two-year to a four-year cycle was forwarded through faculty governance and approved by the Faculty Senate. The subcommittee reviewed all department program assessment reports and provided each department with a written response. A rubric was developed to aid in the review of assessment reports.

Academic Departments

The subcommittee received nineteen program assessment reports on 1999-2001 activities. One department did not submit a report. A second department asked to change its report due date for two programs to October 2002 so that all program assessment reports could be done at one time. Departments used a variety of assessment methods including:

- Local tests
- Portfolio reviews
- Client feedback
- National exams
- Student survey
- Faculty survey
- Student advisory forum
- Placement rates

- Senior exit interview and survey
- Performance appraisal, evaluation, jury
- Self-assessment
- Capstone project
- Professional activities
- Pre- and post-test
- Alumni survey

The Faculty Senate approved the following recommendation from the Assessment Subcommittee on November 17, 1999. “Departments should review and revise their program assessment plans, where necessary, during the 2000-2001 academic year and file a copy of the revised plan with the Dean, Vice Chancellor and Provost, and Assessment Subcommittee by October 15, 2001.” Assessment plans for twenty-three programs have been received.

Student Affairs

A "Profile of the Freshman Class" and "Stated Wellness Needs of the Freshman Class" were completed for fall 2001 freshmen.

Participants in Freshmen Interest Group program were surveyed to ascertain their opinions of various aspects of these programs.

The Student Involvement and Employment Office and University Centers surveyed graduating seniors in the spring of 2001 regarding how much their experience at UWSP had benefited them in terms of a variety of learning outcomes and the importance of their coursework, job, and extra-curricular activities in contributing to the perceived benefits.

“ARC to Success” participants were surveyed regarding the helpfulness of topics covered in ARC sessions.

Institutional

No institutional level assessments were conducted during the 2001-2002 academic year.

What We Learned about UWSP Students

Assessment Subcommittee

All students (N = 1420) enrolled in Minority Studies Courses fall 2001 were asked by email to complete a MNS survey on the web. 340 surveys were submitted for a completion rate of 24%. All courses are represented—Anthropology 371; Interior Architecture 160; Music 105 and 304; Political Science 202 and 414; Psychology 322; Religious Studies 102; Sociology 101, 102 and 270; and, Women Studies 105. The proportion of surveys returned for each course and proportion enrolled are similar.

Students were asked to indicate the extent the Minority Studies course they took during the fall 2001 semester contributed to their knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas. The following table displays the survey results.

Minority Studies Survey Responses

(Percentage and number of responses in each category are indicated)

	Very much	Quite a bit	Some	Very little	No Opinion
1. Understanding the pluralistic/diverse/multicultural nature of American Society.	17.4 (59)	42.1 (143)	33.5 (114)	5.6 (19)	1.5 (5)
2. Becoming more respectful of the pluralistic/diverse/multicultural nature of American society.	20.6 (70)	35.9 (122)	29.7 (101)	12.1 (41)	1.8 (6)
3. Ability to interact with diverse peoples in the workplace.	14.1 (48)	21.5 (73)	31.2 (106)	27.1 (92)	6.2 (21)
4. Ability to interact with diverse peoples in the community.	16.8 (57)	22.6 (77)	35.6 (121)	19.4 (66)	5.6 (19)
5. Understanding diversity issues in the workplace.	15.6 (53)	29.2 (99)	26.5 (90)	22.4 (76)	6.2 (21)
6. Understanding diversity issues in the community.	20.9 (71)	33.3 (113)	30.4 (103)	12.1 (41)	3.2 (11)
7. Understanding the history of harassment, bigotry, prejudice and discrimination in all settings.	26.5 (90)	32.2 (109)	23.3 (79)	15.6 (53)	2.4 (8)
8. Understanding the current circumstances of harassment, bigotry, prejudice and discrimination in all settings.	21.8 (74)	28.9 (98)	26.8 (91)	18.9 (64)	3.5 (12)
9. Awareness of gender, race, class, ethnic, and religious issues.	33.7 (114)	38.2 (129)	21.3 (72)	5.6 (19)	1.2 (4)
10. Ability to think critically about gender, race, class, ethnic, and religious issues.	26.2 (88)	36.9 (124)	24.4 (82)	10.4 (35)	2.1 (7)
11. Ability to think with an open mind about gender, race, class, ethnic, and religious issues.	31.7 (107)	36.1 (122)	21.9 (74)	8.6 (29)	1.8 (6)
12. Awareness of the diversity of scholarly views on race, gender, class, ethnicity, and religious issues.	20.7 (70)	35.5 (120)	29.0 (98)	12.4 (42)	2.4 (8)
13. Awareness of the impact gender, race, class, ethnicity, and religion has on the lives of majority people.	23.3 (79)	38.9 (132)	23.3 (79)	12.1 (41)	2.4 (8)
14. Awareness of the impact gender, race, class, ethnicity, and religion has on the lives of minority people.	25.2 (85)	41.2 (139)	23.1 (78)	9.2 (31)	1.2 (4)
15. Knowledge of the cultural heritage of African-Americans.	14.8 (50)	23.1 (78)	33.8 (114)	22.3 (75)	5.9 (20)
16. Knowledge of the cultural heritage of Hispanic-Americans.	9.5 (32)	14.5 (49)	33.5 (113)	33.2 (112)	9.2 (31)
17. Knowledge of the cultural heritage of Asian-Americans.	10.1 (34)	18.1 (61)	32.0 (108)	30.6 (103)	9.2 (31)
18. Knowledge of the cultural heritage of American Indians.	14.8 (50)	19.8 (67)	30.5 (103)	27.5 (93)	7.4 (25)
19. Overall knowledge of the distinctive cultural heritages of minority groups.	13.4 (45)	31.8 (107)	37.4 (126)	14.5 (49)	3.0 (10)
Overall contribution	19.9	30.5	28.8	16.8	4.0

- Over 60% of the students reported that their Minority Studies courses contributed very much or quite a bit to their knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas:
 - Understanding the pluralistic/diverse/multicultural nature of American Society.
 - Understanding the history of harassment, bigotry, prejudice and discrimination in all settings.
 - Awareness of gender, race, class, ethnic, and religious issues.
 - Ability to think critically and with an open mind about gender, race, class, ethnic, and religious issues.
 - Awareness of the impact gender, race, class, ethnicity, and religion has on the lives of majority and minority people.

- 40% or less reported that their Minority Studies courses contributed very much or quite a bit to their knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas:
 - Ability to interact with diverse peoples in the workplace.
 - Knowledge of the cultural heritage of African-Americans, Hispanic-Americans, Asian-Americans or American Indians. These percentages may reflect the current requirement that at least one group be addressed in a MNS course.

Academic Departments

In general, departments continue to find strengths in their programs. National, state, and local procedures generally show that students are succeeding in their majors. Surveys of student and alumni satisfaction with programs are generally very positive.

Student Affairs

The FIG survey found that students generally felt the FIG program met their expectations and helped them develop their study skills, address concerns about attending college, and locate campus resources. Seventy-seven percent reported having contact with faculty outside the classroom.

“ARC to Success” participants were most likely to indicate that sessions on study tips, test taking, registration, note taking and learning styles were helpful. Students made a number of positive comments about the program.

The Senior Survey administered by The Student Involvement and Employment Office and University Centers asked graduating seniors to assess their undergraduate experiences by rating how much—not at all = 1, slightly = 2, some = 3, much = 4, very much = 5--their experience at UWSP benefited them in terms of twenty learning outcomes. Second, they were asked to rate the importance—very important = 4, moderately important=3, slightly important=2, or no importance=1--of their job, coursework, and extracurricular activities in achieving each of the outcomes. The following table displays the mean responses for 728 respondents. Ns for individual items vary due to non-responses. [Contact Laura Ketchum-Ciftci, Student Involvement & Employment for additional information about this survey.]

Senior Survey of Undergraduate Experiences, 2001

Learning Outcomes	Perceived Benefit	Factors Causing Benefits		
		Course-work	Extra-curricular	Employment
Ability to think and act independently	4.27	3.35	3.17	3.49
Vocabulary, terminology and facts in a variety of fields of knowledge	4.12	3.36	2.66	3.07
Understanding of other people and their values	4.09	3.18	3.08	3.28
Experience and skills in relating to other people	4.20	3.22	3.25	3.53
Development of close friendships	4.15	2.99	3.26	3.08
Leadership abilities	4.15	3.23	3.22	3.48
Ability to make decisions	4.22	3.36	3.16	3.49
Ability to speak clearly, correctly and effectively	4.13	3.36	2.94	3.36
Understanding your abilities, limitations, interests and values	4.14	3.22	3.05	3.25
Ability to express yourself effectively in writing	4.00	3.34	2.56	2.93
Background & preparation for further education in a professional, technical or scholarly area	3.98	3.21	2.53	3.02
Awareness of different cultures and ways of life	3.68	2.81	2.70	2.84
Understanding major concepts of mathematics and quantitative analysis	3.26	2.71	1.91	2.40
Recognizing assumptions, making logical inferences and reaching conclusions	4.05	3.25	2.69	3.16
Ability to withhold judgment, raise questions and examine contrary views	4.05	3.19	2.78	3.13
Understanding the nature of scientific theory, experimentation	3.64	2.89	2.09	2.40
Ability to put ideas together and see relationships, similarities and differences	4.00	3.20	2.74	3.23
Skills and techniques directly applicable to the job	3.95	3.19	2.61	3.32
Broadened acquaintance with important literature	3.28	2.78	2.04	2.23
Appreciation and enjoyment of art, music and drama	3.33	2.43	2.46	2.19

- Seniors reported large benefits--4.0 or higher--from their experiences at UWSP on 13 of the 20 learning outcomes.

- Students generally perceive coursework, job, and extracurricular activities as at least moderately important in causing these benefits.

How We Responded to the Assessment Information

Assessment Subcommittee

The assessment subcommittee continues to conduct workshops and distribute information to help departments better understand assessment and how it fits with department, college, university and UW System missions. The subcommittee continues to work with departments and the institution to develop ways to use assessment results to improve programs. Departments were provided with Minority Studies Survey results for their courses.

Academic Departments

Departments have used or plan to use assessment results to make the following changes:

- Require students to complete a performance task demonstrating a skill
- Recommend students take a course to develop particular skills
- Added existing or new courses to major
- Introduced activities oriented towards career preparation
- Increased emphasis on particular aspects of programs—research projects, field skills, quantitative methods, computer technology
- Special assessment of particular courses
- Modify instruction
- Upgraded computer infrastructure and specialized lab equipment

Student Affairs

Adjustments to the FIG and “ARC to Success” programs will be made based on students suggestions.

Institutional

The Office of Academic Affairs sponsored three teleconferences related to assessment during the spring of 2000.

1. The First Year of College: Assessing What We Value
2. Are We Testing What We Are Teaching?
3. Teaching and Assessing for Critical Thinking & Deep Learning

Videos of these teleconferences and participant packets are available to individuals and departments for professional development.

Information from the National Survey of Student Engagement was presented to the Dean’s Council, Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate, L & S Forum and University Centers Staff.

The 2002 Teaching Conference focused on teaching for diversity. Julie Andrzejewski facilitated a workshop on Diversity in the Classroom. Diversity issues were discussed during lunch and classroom techniques for teaching diversity were presented in breakout sessions.

What We Learned about the Assessment Process

Previously identified weaknesses in our assessment process continue to exist. These include missing mission statements, inadequately defined objectives; lack of valid and reliable testing procedures; difficulty in using assessment results to improve teaching and student learning in programs or specific courses; lack of standards to evaluate assessment results; inadequate dissemination of results and, inadequate use of assessment results in planning and budget.

Recommendations

The subcommittee recommends that the Provost and Vice Chancellor be informed of those departments that have not filed reviewed/revised assessment plans.